



Apricots **Fact Sheet**



Where did they come from?

Apricots originated in China and have been around for more than 4,000 years. Trimmings of the apricot tree were progressively brought through the Persian Empire to the Mediterranean where they became a very popular fruit. Apricots were introduced to America by Spanish explorers who planted this fruit in the gardens of Spanish missions throughout California. In 1792, the first major production of apricots started in northern California.

Where do they grow?

Apricots are grown in the United States including California, Indiana and Washington State but are also grown in Chile, New Zealand, Turkey, France, Spain and Italy. California produces 95% of the apricots grown in the United States but only about 16% of these apricots are sold fresh. U.S. grown apricots are available mid-May to mid-August and imported apricots from Chile and New Zealand are available from December through March. However, peak season for apricots range between December to January and May to June.

How do they grow?

Apricots are grown on small to medium sized trees, which contain spreading canopies. Apricots grow best in deep, fertile, well-drained soils and are most successful in mild, Mediterranean climates where the weather is warm and there is no possibility of frost. Apricots are picked by hand. The apricot resembles a peach, but is smaller and has a smooth, oval pit that falls out easily when the fruit is halved. Fresh apricots are ripe when they yield to gentle pressure.

Are they healthy?

- ✎ Contains high amounts of vitamin A which keeps skin, eyes and bones healthy
- ✎ Contains good amounts of vitamin C which helps in cell formation, iron absorption and cold prevention
- ✎ Does not contain saturated fat, sodium or cholesterol
- ✎ Good source of potassium

How do you pick a good one?

- ✎ Choose fresh apricots that are plump with golden orange color
- ✎ Avoid ones that are pale yellow, greenish-yellow, shriveled or bruised
- ✎ Apricots, which are soft, have the best flavor

☺ FUN FACTS! ☺

Apricots

Did you know...

☺ Did you know apricots are a member of the rose family?

☺ Did you know there are many varieties of apricots;
Pattersons, Blenheims, Tiltons, Castlebrites?

☺ Did you know apricots may be eaten raw or cooked?

☺ Did you know apricots are a relative of the peach?

☺ Did you know that apricots ripen earlier than most other
summer fruits?

☺ Did you know that apricots are very sweet?

☺ Did you know that any recipe that contains peaches or
nectarines can be substituted with apricots?

Remember ...

**Include 5 - 9 servings of fruits and vegetables per
day!**



School Food Service Link.....

Quick Steps to 5 - 9 servings of fruits and vegetables per day at school...

Listed below are suggestions that you may choose at your own discretion

RECIPES:

- ✓ Try a new recipe with apricots ---
Substitute canned apricots for peaches in
Peach Muffin Squares/USDA B-20a
Substitute apricots for peaches in Peach Cobbler and
Peach-Honey Cobbler/USDA C-13;C13a
Use apricots in your favorite Crisp recipe
California Apricot-Oatmeal Breakfast Cake (see attached)
- ✓ Serve canned or frozen apricots in soufflé cups with granola topping
- ✓ Offer dried apricots as a fruit for breakfast or lunch
- ✓ Offer dried apricots as a healthy a la carte snack
- ✓ Add dried apricots to fresh tossed or spinach salads for a unique texture and sweetness
- ✓ Add dried apricots as a topping for hot or cold cereals

**Presentation
Meal Appeal -----
Contrast Texture for
Taste Appeal!**

Add Granola as a
Topping for Fruits ---
Adds Crunch!

MARKETING:

- ✓ Contact the California Apricot Council for resources
www.apricotproducers.com
- ✓ Advertise and highlight the fruit or vegetable of the month on your menu
- ✓ Refer to "Fruits & Vegetables Galore" Kit (*Meal Appeal Manual*) page 9

Quality:

Chill Canned
Fruit Before
Portioning!

PROMOTIONS:

- ✓ Promote a "Sticker Day" with prizes on featured fruit/vegetable menu day;
Give this menu a special name (*Example: Awesome Apricots!*)
- ✓ Feature apricots as a Spring Menu Special ---
Spring into Awesome Apricots!
- ✓ Feature "Orange Day" on the day that you offer apricots on your menu
 - ✓ Encourage the entire school to get involved
 - ✓ Reward students with a small prize if they are wearing orange
 - ✓ Invite a Special Guest to Lunch or Breakfast (*E.g.: Sports Star, College Athlete, Mayor, Congressman, TV Celebrity...*) Give it a try! You never know --- they may get very excited about visiting your school community!
 - ✓ Have a costumed mascot join elementary students for lunch or breakfast
(*E.g.: Use local HS mascot; Contact USDA to use Power Panther costume - Free!*)
www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/)
- ✓ Refer to "Fruits & Vegetables Galore" Kit (*Meal Appeal Manual*) pages 16-31

Safety:

Keep Can Openers
Sanitized ---Run Through
Dish Machine!



School Food Service Link.....



School Food Service Recipes



California Apricot-Oatmeal Breakfast Cake

Created by Diane Wegner Deshler

Source: *California Apricot Producers*

Sweet and nutritious with Vitamin A-rich apricots and heart-healthy oats!

Ingredients:

Yield: 96 Servings

3 pounds 8 ounces all-purpose flour
9 ounces oats old-fashioned
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon baking powder
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon baking soda
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons salt
3 pounds unsalted butter, softened
2 pounds 12 ounces sugar
1 pound 4 ounces brown sugar
12 large eggs
6 cups low-fat buttermilk
1 #10 can California apricots, drained

Directions:

- Preheat convection oven to 325°F.
- Coat three 12"x18"x2" hotel pans with cooking spray. Line the bottom of the pans with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, combine flour, oats, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Set aside.
- Chop drained apricots into medium dice and set aside.
- In a 20-quart mixer, cream butter using the paddle attachment until soft and smooth.
- Add sugar and brown sugar slowly to butter; combine until mixture is smooth and creamy.
- Beat in eggs, one at a time, until combined and batter is smooth.
- Slowly add dry ingredients alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with dry ingredients.
- Stir in apricots; do not over-mix.
 - Distribute the cake batter evenly among the three prepared hotel pans.
- Bake cakes about 30 minutes or until done. They will be golden brown on top and center will test clean with a toothpick or knife.
- Cool cakes for 1 hour. Carefully turn cakes over onto parchment lined sheet pans. Cool completely. Turn cakes back over onto new parchment lined sheet pans (so that the cake is right side up for serving).
- Serve or cover and store overnight. This cake keeps well and can easily be served the next day. Each pan makes 32 servings.
- Optional: After slicing, lightly sprinkle cake slices with powdered sugar.

Nutrition Facts (per 3.30 oz. serving): Calories 265.29, Calories from Fat 109.13, Fat 12.13 g, Protein 3.42 g, Carbohydrates 36.88 g, Cholesterol 57.75 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.97 g, Calcium 38.99 mg, Iron 1.20 mg, Sodium 146.64 mg